

Employee Survey on Van Pooling

1. The purpose of this bulletin is to survey employee interest in the subject of van pooling prior to beginning a substantial effort to initiate van pooling at CIA. Van pooling, as considered here, is an arrangement whereby a group of 10-15 individuals contract to share the expenses of acquiring and maintaining a vehicle for home-to-work transportation. A popular form of van pooling consists of a driver-coordinator who purchases or leases the vehicle, sets up routes, collects the fares and drives the vehicle in return for free transportation and passengers who pay a monthly rate to cover the operating costs of the van pool. Benefits arising to van poolers might include economical transportation, freedom from gas lines, preferred parking and for the passengers, relief from driving to and from work. In addition, widespread van pooling has the potential for reducing the number of vehicles on the roadways -- reducing gasoline consumption, pollution and traffic congestion.

2. However, the concept of van pooling is not yet fully developed and significant problems must be resolved before it can be implemented at CIA. First, because home-to-work transportation has always been considered a personal expense to employees, the Agency cannot offer substantial aid to the van pooling arrangement in terms of funding and management. Accordingly, the formation, underwriting and management of a van pool must be the responsibility of private individuals or organizations. Second, because it is not clear how federal and state regulatory and taxing authorities view van pools, there may be significant administrative and tax disincentives to van pooling. Also, certain covert CIA employees may be prevented from becoming active members of a van pool if they are required to place their names on a roster of van pool participants. However, given sufficient employee interest in the subject of van pooling, efforts will be made to minimize the roadblocks that may stand in the way of successful implementation of the project.

3. In that regard, we ask that you consider the idea of becoming a participant in a van pooling arrangement, and if you have an interest please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to _____ by _____.